



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION :: Janice O. Davis, *Interim Officer*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Local Education Agencies
Directors, Local Management Entities

FROM: Janice O. Davis, Interim Officer
NC Department of Public Instruction

Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services

DATE: June 17, 2005

RE: **Joint Transition Planning for Children's Services**

In 2001, pursuant to the requirements of HB 381, the North Carolina General Assembly mandated significant changes in the manner in which mental health; developmental disabilities and substance abuse (mh/dd/sa) services are managed and delivered in this State. To accomplish this goal, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is realigning its community mh/dd/sa system's clinical, financial, and administrative infrastructure to provide consumers, families and communities with meaningful opportunities for greater participation and system oversight. The cornerstone of this effort is system-wide adoption of person-centered planning and the use of evidence-based and emerging best practices that are being implemented through a redesigned service delivery system.

The changes that are being undertaken will involve new approaches to serving consumers with mh/dd/sa needs, some of which directly impact the relationships between the local education agencies (LEAs), the local management entities (LMEs) and the provider community. This means that a number of the services that are currently being provided to support consumers with mh/dd/sa needs, including some students in the public school setting, will be affected. For example, the Community Based Services (CBS), which is one of the most utilized Medicaid funded mental health services provided in schools, will be eliminated effective October 1, 2005. At that time it is expected that the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will approve a more comprehensive replacement service. The new service, Community Support, will offer focused skill-building interventions to support the child and others in the school environment in order to improve the ability of each individual to succeed in his or her school placement.

The NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) are establishing an interdepartmental transition team to facilitate this movement to a more focused, effective mental health service in the school setting. The transition team will be appointed in the very near future so that sufficient time is devoted to this task prior to the implementation of the new mental health services.

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Our respective state and local agencies have a shared commitment to children and families. We are committed to helping families help their children be healthy, to stay in school, and to remain at home and in their community. The fulfillment of this commitment requires on-going coordination and communication.

Thank you for all that you do for the children of this State and for your support of our current undertaking. If you should have any questions regarding this matter, please direct them to Michael Lancaster, MD or Susan E. Robinson with the DHHS Division of MH/DD/SAS, or Diann Irwin with the DPI Division of Exceptional Children. They can be reached at michael.lancaster@ncmail.net or 919-733-7011, susan.robinson@ncmail.net or 919-715-2656, dirwin@dpi.state.nc.us or 919-807-3298, respectively.

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